

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8252

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION NATO

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USEUCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 351

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CY TU

SUBJECT: TURKISH COMMUNAL POLITICS; INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

REF: NICOSIA 317; NICOSIA A-16; FBIS M231916, M251438

SUMMARY: TURK CYPRIOT PRESS CONTINUES HEADLINE WORLD MOSLEM CONGRESS. KUCHUK/DENKTASH SPLIT DEEPENS, TURK EMBASSY MAINTAINS NEUTRALITY. END SUMMARY

1. DESPITE GOT FONMIN DENIAL, LOCAL TURKISH PRESS HAS CONTINUED FAN MAINLAND "HURRYET" ACCOUNT WORLD MOSLEM CONGRESS TO EFFECT TURKEY PREPARED BREAK RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL ON CONDITION ISLAMIC COUNTRIES RECOGNIZE INDEPENDENT TURK CYPRIOT STATE (M251438). TCPA DID NOT RPT NOT SEND REPRESENTATIVE BUT TELEGRAPHED MESSAGE CALLING ON CONGRESS TO SUPPORT ISLAND'S MOSLEMS. JUDGING BY LACK OF LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE FEB 26, IT APPEARS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON CYPRUS (NICOSIA 317) DID NOT RPT NOT COME TO VOTE

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2. ABOVE STORY SUPERSEDED IN LOCAL PRESS BY ONGOING DENKTASH/KUCHUK DEBATE, WHICH REACHED NEW HEIGHTS (DEPTHS?) OF VITUPERATION DURING WEEKEND. ON FEB 22, DENKTASH ACCUSED KUCHUK OF FAILING PAY TAXES FOR PAST 10 YEARS, NOTING THAT KUCHUK INHERITED HIS ENTIRE FORTUNE FROM FATHER (WHO, IN TURN, BECAME RICH BY SUPPLYING BRITISH ARMY DURING WWI CAMPAIGN AGAINST TURKS). KUCHUK REPLIED IN KIND: CASTIGATING DENKTASH FOR DESERTING COMMUNITY DURING EARLY YEARS OF STRUGGLE AND ENRICHING HIMSELF AT COMMUNITY'S EXPENSE. FORMER VICE PRESIDENT IMPLIED DENKTASH HAD HAND IN NUMBER OF MURDERS, MOTIVES OF WHICH WERE NOT RPT NOT POLITICAL. ON MORE SERIOUS NOTE, KUCHUK ATTACKED DENKTASH FOR FAILURE FULFILL CAMPAIGN PROMISES AND VICE PRESIDENT'S USE OF RADIO BAYRAK FOR OWN POLITICAL PURPOSES. LATTER THEME EXPANDED UPON IN SEPARATE FEB 23 "HALKIN SESI" EDITORIAL WRITTEN BY DISSIDENT PARLIAMENTARIAN FUAT VEZIROGLU. BOTH ACCOUNTS STATE "BAYRAK'S" BIASED REPORTING WILL BE RAISED WITH NEW TURKISH GOVT.

3. COMMENT: EMBASSY CONTACTS IN TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY ARE GENUINELY PUZZLED BY TURKISH GOVT'S FAILURE HALT INCREASINGLY ACRIMONIOUS PUBLIC DEBATE. GOT NEUTRALITY READ TWO WAYS: DISINTEREST IN DENKTASH'S POLITICAL FUTURE; AND/OR MORE RELAXED ATTITUDE TOWARD PUBLIC DEBATE ON BEHALF NEW ECEVIT REGIME. WE SUSPECT BOTH ELEMENTS PLAY SOME PART. FOLLOWING RECENT ANKARA MEETING ON CYPURS, TURKISH EMBOFF TOLD US GOT IS LESS INTERESTED IN DEFENDING DENKTASH AGAINST LOCAL CRITICS. ALSO, IT CLEAR THAT LOCAL TURKISH OFFICIALS WISH MAINTAIN LOW-PROFILE ON CONTENTIOUS ISSUES UNTIL THEY HAVE CLEAR PICTURE NEW GOVT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD TURKISH COMMUNITY. THIS SAID, MOST EMBASSY CONTACTS WELCOME INCREASED PUBLIC DEBATE, A NEW FEATURE IN RECENT MONTHS OF TURK CYPRIOT POLITICAL LIFE. ALL, HOWEVER, WISH IT WERE BEING CONDUCTED ON HIGHER PLANE. END COMMENT.

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